

What is claimed is:

1. A point management method that manages points that are given to a user, comprising:

a step of confirming an expiration date of points of a giving source user, after accepting a request for giving points from the giving source user of points, by referring to a user database that stores information of the number of points that the user has and the expiration date, according to each member;

10 a step of accepting designation of a giving number of points and a giving destination user from the giving source user, in a case where the expiration date of points of the giving source user has not passed; and;

15 a step of subtracting the designated giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user that is stored in said user database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user that is stored in said user database.

2. The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising:

20 a step of extracting information of a user that belongs to the same group as the group that the giving source user belongs, from a belonging database that stores information, correlating a user and a group to which the user belongs;

25 a step of providing the extracted information of users to the user terminal of the giving source user, as information of candidates of

being the giving destination user; and

a step of accepting a user, selected by the giving source user, from the candidates of the giving destination user, as the giving destination user.

- 5 3. The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of extracting information of the group to which the giving destination user belongs and the group to which the giving source user belongs, from the belonging database that stores information, correlating a user and a group to which the user belongs,
10 and making giving of point possible to the giving destination user, in a case where the group to which the giving destination user belongs and the group to which the giving source user belongs match.

4. The point management method according to claim 1, further comprising:

- 15 a step of determining whether the expiration date of points of the giving destination user has passed, by referring to said user database; and

a step of making giving of points possible to the giving destination user from the giving source user, in a case where the
20 expiration date of the giving destination user has not passed.

5. A management computer that is connected to a user database that stores information of the number of points that a user has and expiration date of the points that the user has, correlating it with identification information of the user, comprising:

- 25 a request receiving unit which receives a request for giving of

points, including identification information of the giving source user, from a terminal, via a network;

an expiration date confirming unit which searches the user database based on the identification information of the giving source user, and confirms that the expiration date of points of the giving source member that is stored in the user database, has not passed;

a giving content receiving unit which receives information that specifies the giving number of points and giving destination user, from said terminal, via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of points of the giving source user has not passed; and

a point number updating unit which subtracts the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user that is stored in said user database, and adds the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user that is stored in said user database.

6. The management computer according to claim 5, wherein, said management computer is further connected to a belonging database that stores identification information of each user and group identification information of the group to which the user belongs, and the user information of each user is further stored in said user database, and

said giving content receiving unit:

extracts identification information of users correlated with the same group identification information as the group identification

information of the group, which the giving source user belongs to, from said belonging database, and extracts user information that corresponds to the identification information of the extracted users, from said user database;

- 5 sends the extracted user information as information of candidates of the giving destination user, to the terminal of the giving source user; and

receives from said terminal, information indicating the giving destination user, which is designated from the candidates of the
10 giving destination user, by the giving source user.

7. The management computer according to claim 5, wherein said management computer is further connected to a belonging database that stores identification information of users and group identification information of the group to which said user belongs,
15 correlated with each other, and

said point number updating unit:

extracts group identification information of the group to which the giving destination user belongs and group identification information of the group to which the giving source user belongs,
20 from said belonging database;

determines whether the extracted group identification information matches or not; and

makes giving of points to the giving destination user possible, in a case where the extracted group identification information matches.

- 25 8. The management computer according to claim 5, wherein

said point number updating unit determines whether the expiration date of points of the giving destination user has passed or not, by referring to said user database, and makes giving of points from the giving source user to the giving destination user possible, in a case 5 where the expiration date of points of the giving destination user has not passed.

9. A computer readable recording medium that stores a program for controlling a computer to execute:

a step of receiving a request of point giving, including 10 identification information of the giving source user, from a terminal, via a network;

a step of searching a user database that stores the number of points that a user has and the expiration date, based on the identification information of the giving source user, and confirms that 15 the expiration date of points of the giving source user, which is stored in the user database, has not passed;

a step of obtaining information that specifies the giving number of points and the giving destination user, from said terminal, via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of 20 points of the giving source user has not passed; and

a step of subtracting the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user, stored in the user database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user, stored in the user database.

25 10. The computer readable recording medium according to

claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute:

- a step of extracting the identification information of the users correlated with the same group identification information as the 5 group identification information of the group, which the giving source user belongs to, from the belonging database that stores the identification information of the users and the identification information of the group to which the user belongs, correlated with each other;
 - 10 a step of extracting the user information that corresponds to the extracted identification information of the user, from the user database that further stores user information of each user;
 - a step of sending the extracted user information to the terminal of the giving source user, as information of candidates of the giving 15 destination user; and
 - a step of receiving from said terminal, information indicating the giving destination user, selected from the candidates of the giving destination user.
11. The computer readable recording medium according to
20 claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute a step of:
- extracting group identification information of the group to which the giving destination user belongs and the group identification information of the group to which the giving source 25 user belongs, from the belonging database that stores, correlating

with each other, identification information of the user and group identification information of the group to which the user belongs;

determining whether the extracted group identification information matches; and

- 5 making possible the giving of points to the giving destination user, in a case where the extracted group identification information matches.

- 10 12. The computer readable recording medium according to claim 9, that stores said program for further controlling a computer to execute:

a step of determining whether the expiration date of the points of the giving destination user has passed or not, by referring to the user database; and

- 15 a step of making possible the giving of points to the giving destination user from the giving source user, in a case where the expiration date of points of the giving destination user has not passed.

- 20 13. A computer data signal, embedded in a carrier wave, and representing a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a user database that stores correlating, the number of points that a user has and information of expiration date with the identification information of the user, to execute:

a step of receiving a request for giving points, including identification information of the giving source user, from a terminal via a network;

- 25 a step of searching the user database, based on the identification

information of the giving source user, and confirming that the expiration date of the points of the giving source user, stored in the user database has not passed;

- 5 a step of obtaining information that specifies the giving number of points and the giving destination user from said terminal via said network, in a case where it is confirmed that the expiration date of the points of the giving source user has not passed; and
- 10 a step of subtracting the giving number of points from the number of points of the giving source user, stored in the user database, and adding the giving number of points to the number of points of the giving destination user, stored in the user database.